[29th January 1929

Mr. R. Srinivasa Ayyangar :—" With reference to the answer to clause (c), may I ask the hon. Minister to state the grounds which influenced the Government to come to the decision and to place the Government Order on the table ? "

The hon. Dr. P. Subbarayan :—" Notice."

Election of a councillor to Ward No. II of the Chidambaram Municipality.

* 1131-F Q.—Mr. V. I. Muniswami Pillai : Will the hon. the Minister for Education and Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(a) whether it is a fact that the election of a municipal councillor from Ward No. II of the Chidambaram Municipality did not take place before 1st November 1928 ;

(b) whether any date was fixed for polling to elect a councillor from Ward No. II ; and

(c) if the answer to (a) is in the negative under what circumstances the election did not take place on the date fixed and what steps the Government have taken in this connexion ?

A.—(a) & (b). Yes.

(c) The poll for the second ward was not held on the date originally fixed as the polling officer took ill and could not be present. The Government issued instructions to the Vice-Chairman to complete the election at a very early date. The poll was actually held on 22nd November 1928 but as even this election was found to be invalid it has been set aside and a fresh election ordered.

Village Panchayats

Amendment of the Village Panchayats Act, 1920.

* 1132 Q.—Mr. D. Narayana Raju : Will the hon. the Minister for Education and Local Self-Government be pleased to state—

(a) whether the Government propose to introduce a Bill to amend the Village Panchayats Act, 1920 ; and if so, what its main provisions are and when it will be introduced in the Council ; and

(b) whether Government have considered the advisability of conferring judicial functions on panchayats constituted under the Act ?

A.—(a) The draft of the Bill is under scrutiny. Its provisions have not yet been settled. It will be introduced in the Council as early as practicable.

(b) Yes.

Mr. D. Narayana Raju :—" May I know when the draft Bill was ready and how long has it been under consideration ? "

The hon. Dr. P. Subbarayan :—" The draft Bill was ready about two months ago It has been under scrutiny since then. The conference that met on the Local Boards Bill suggested that village panchayats should be the first unit in local self-government and that this principle ought to be incorporated in the Local Boards Bill."

Mr. A. Kaleswara Rao :—" May I know whether the conclusions of the conference will be put forward in the form of a Bill before this House ? "